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HOW SHALL THE PRESIDENT BE ELECTED?

THE clause of the Constitution of the United States that prescribes the manner in which the President and Vice-President shall be elected, was adopted only a short time before the adjournment of the convention. It was a substitute for a provision that had, in principle, already received the approval of the body among its earliest acts, and had been re-affirmed in successive reconsiderations of the subject. Nobody can rise from a perusal of the journal of the convention without being thoroughly convinced that that original provision embodied the deliberate judgment of the majority (we may say, perhaps, of the entire body, since the votes were occasionally unanimous) as to the wisest mode of disposing of this difficult subject. At the opening of the convention, late in May, 1787, a series of resolutions was introduced by Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, which formed the principal text of a long-continued discussion of the provisions that the new Constitution ought to embrace. The first clause of one of these was in the following words:

“Resolved, That a national executive be instituted, to be chosen by the national legislature for the term of years.”

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THE CERTAINTY OF ENDLESS PUNISHMENT.

THE chief objections to the doctrine of endless punishment are not Biblical but speculative. The great majority of students, and exegetes find the tenet in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. Davidson, the most learned of English rationalistic critics, explicitly acknowledges that "if a specific sense be attached to words, never-ending misery is enunciated in the Bible. On the presumption that one doctrine is taught, it is the eternity of hell torments. Bad exegesis may attempt to banish it from the New Testament Scriptures, but it is still there, and expositors who wish to get rid of it, as Canon Farrar does, injure the cause they have in view by misrepresentation. It must be allowed that the New Testament record not only makes Christ assert everlasting punishment, but Paul and John. But the question should be looked at from a larger platform than single texts — in the light of God's attributes, and the nature of the soul. The destination of man, and the Creator's infinite goodness, conflicting as they do with everlasting punishment, remove it from the sphere of rational belief. If provision be not made in revelation for a change of moral character after death, it is made in reason. Philosophical considerations must not be set aside even by scripture." (Last Things, pp. 133, 136, 151.)

So long, then, as the controversy is carried on by an appeal to the Bible, the defender of endless retribution has comparatively an easy task. But when the appeal is made to human feeling and sentiment, or to ratiocination, the demonstration requires more effort. And yet the doctrine is not only Biblical but rational. It is defensible on the basis of sound ethics and pure reason. Nothing is requisite for its maintenance but the admission of three cardinal truths of theism, namely, that there is a just God; that man has free will; and that sin is voluntary action. If

these are denied, there can be no defense of endless punishment — or of any other doctrine, except atheism and its corollaries.

The Bible and all the creeds of Christendom affirm man's free agency in sinning against God. The transgression which is to receive the endless punishment is voluntary. Sin, whether it be inward inclination or outward act, is unforced human agency. This is the uniform premise of Christian theologians of all schools. Endless punishment supposes the liberty of the human will, and is impossible without it. Could a man prove that he is necessitated in his murderous hate and his murderous act, he would prove, in this very proof, that he ought not to be punished for it, either in time or eternity. Could Satan really convince himself that his moral character is not his own work, but that of God, or of nature, his remorse would cease, and his punishment would end. Self-determination runs parallel with hell.

Guilt, then, is what is punished, and not misfortune. Free and not forced agency is what feels the stroke of justice. What, now, is this stroke? What do law and justice do when they punish? Everything depends upon the right answer to this question. The fallacies and errors of Universalism find their nest and hiding-place at this point. The true definition of punishment detects and excludes them.

Punishment is neither chastisement nor calamity. Men suffer calamity, says Christ, not because they or their parents have sinned, "but that the works of God should be made manifest in them." John ix. 3. Chastisement is inflicted in order to develop a good but imperfect character already formed. "The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth," and "what son is he whom the earthly father chasteneth not?" Hebrews xii. 6, 7. Punishment, on the other hand, is retribution, and is not intended to do the work of either calamity or chastisement, but a work of its own. And this work is to vindicate law, to satisfy justice. Punishment, therefore, is wholly retrospective in its primary aim. It looks back at what has been done in the past. Its first and great object is requital. A man is hung for murder, principally and before all other reasons because he has voluntarily transgressed the law forbidding murder. He is not hung from a prospective aim, such as his own moral improvement, or for the purpose of deterring others from committing murder. The remark of the English judge to the horse-thief, in the days when such theft was capitally punished, "You are not hung be-

cause you have stolen a horse, but that horses may not be stolen," has never been regarded as eminently judicial. It is true that personal improvement may be one consequence of the infliction of penalty. But the consequence must not be confounded with the purpose. *Cum hoc non ergo propter hoc*. The criminal may come to see and confess that his crime deserves its punishment, and in genuine unselfish penitence may take sides with the law, approve its retribution, and go into the presence of the Final Judge, relying upon that great atonement which satisfies eternal justice for sin; but even this, the greatest personal benefit of all, is not what is aimed at in man's punishment of the crime of murder. For should there be no such personal benefit as this attending the infliction of the human penalty, the one sufficient reason for inflicting it still holds good, namely, the fact that the law has been violated, and demands the death of the offender for this reason simply and only. "The notion of ill-desert and punishableness," says Kant (*Praktische Vernunft*, 151. Ed. Rosenkranz), "is necessarily implied in the idea of voluntary transgression; and the idea of punishment excludes that of happiness in all its forms. For though he who inflicts punishment may, it is true, also have a benevolent purpose to produce by the punishment some good effect upon the criminal, yet the punishment must be justified, first of all, as pure and simple requital and retribution: that is, as a kind of suffering that is demanded by the law without any reference to its prospective beneficial consequences; so that even if no moral improvement and no personal advantage should subsequently accrue to the criminal, he must acknowledge that justice has been done to him, and his experience is exactly conformed to his conduct. In every instance of punishment, properly so called, justice is the very first thing, and constitutes the essence of it. A benevolent purpose and a happy effect, it is true, may be conjoined with punishment; but the criminal cannot claim this as his due, and he has no right to reckon upon it. All that he deserves is punishment, and this is all that he can expect from the law which he has transgressed." These are the words of as penetrating and ethical a thinker as ever lived.

Neither is it true, that the first and principal aim of punishment is the protection of society and the public good. This, like the personal benefit in the preceding case, is only secondary and incidental. The public good is not a sufficient reason for

putting a man to death; but the satisfaction of law is. This view of penalty is most disastrous in its influence, as well as false in its ethics. For if the good of the public is the true reason and object of punishment, the amount of it may be fixed by the end in view. The criminal may be made to suffer more than his crime deserves, if the public welfare, in suppressing this particular kind of crime, requires it. His personal desert and responsibility not being the one sufficient reason for his suffering, he may be made to suffer as much as the public safety requires. It was this theory of penalty that led to the multiplication of capital offenses. The prevention of forgery, it was once claimed in England, required that the forger should forfeit his life, and upon the principle that punishment is for the public protection, and not for strict and exact justice, an offense against human property was expiated by human life. Contrary to the Noachic statute, which punishes only murder with death, this statute weighed out man's life-blood against pounds, shillings, and pence. On this theory, the number of capital offenses became very numerous and the criminal code very bloody. So that, in the long run, nothing is kinder than exact justice. It prevents extremes in either direction—either that of indulgence or that of cruelty.

This theory breaks down, from whatever point it be looked at. Suppose that there were but one person in the universe. If he should transgress the law of God, then, upon the principle of expediency as the ground of penalty, this solitary subject of moral government could not be punished—that is, visited with a suffering that is purely retributive, and not exemplary or corrective. His act has not injured the public, for there is no public. There is no need of his suffering as an example to deter others, for there are no others. But upon the principle of justice, in distinction from expediency, this solitary subject of moral government could be punished.

The vicious ethics of this theory of penalty expresses itself in the demoralizing maxim, "It is better that ten guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should suffer." But this is no more true than the converse, "It is better that ten innocent men should suffer than that one guilty man should escape." It is a choice of equal evil and equal injustice. In either case alike, justice is trampled down. In the first supposed case, there are eleven instances of injustice and wrong; and in the last sup-

posed case, there are likewise eleven instances of injustice and wrong. Unpunished guilt is precisely the same species of evil with punished innocence. To say, therefore, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape than that one innocent man should suffer, is to say that it is better that there should be ten wrongs than one wrong against justice.

The theory that punishment is retributive honors human nature, but the theory that it is merely expedient and useful degrades it. If justice be the true ground of penalty, man is treated as a person; but if the public good is the ground, he is treated as a chattel or a thing. When suffering is judicially inflicted because of the intrinsic gravity and real demerit of crime, man's free will and responsibility are recognized and put in the foreground; and these are his highest and distinguishing attributes. The sufficient reason for his suffering is found wholly within his own person, in the exercise of self-determination. He is not seized by the magistrate and made to suffer for a reason extraneous to his own agency, and for the sake of something lying wholly outside of himself—namely, the safety and happiness of others—but because of his own act. He is not handled like a brute or an inanimate thing that may be put to good use; but he is recognized as a free and voluntary person, who is punished not because punishment is expedient and useful, but because it is just and right; not because the public safety requires it, but because he owes it. The dignity of the man himself, founded in his lofty but hazardous endowment of free will, is acknowledged.

Supposing it, now, to be conceded, that future punishment is retributive in its essential nature, it follows that it must be endless from the nature of the case. For, suffering must continue as long as the reason for it continues. In this respect, it is like law, which lasts as long as its reason lasts: *ratione cessante, cessat ipsa lex*. Suffering that is educational and corrective may come to an end, because moral infirmity, and not guilt, is the reason for its infliction; and moral infirmity may cease to exist. But suffering that is penal can never come to an end, because guilt is the reason for its infliction, and guilt once incurred never ceases to be. The lapse of time does not convert guilt into innocence, as it converts moral infirmity into moral strength; and therefore no time can ever arrive when the guilt of the criminal will cease to deserve and demand its retribution. The reason for retribution to-day is a reason forever. Hence, when God disciplines

and educates his children, he causes only a temporary suffering. In this case, "He will not keep his anger forever." Ps. ciii. 9. But when, as the Supreme Judge, he punishes rebellious and guilty subjects of his government, he causes an endless suffering. In this case, "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix. 48.

The real question therefore, is, whether God ever punishes. That he chastises, is not disputed. But does he ever inflict a suffering that is not intended to reform the transgressor, and does not reform him, but is intended simply and only to vindicate law, and satisfy justice, by requiting him for his transgression? Revelation teaches that he does. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. xii. 19. Retribution is here asserted to be a function of the Supreme Being, and his alone. The creature has no right to punish, except as he is authorized by the Infinite Ruler. "The powers that be are ordained of God. The ruler is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. xiii. 1, 4. The power which civil government has to punish crime—the private person having no such power—is only a delegated right from the Source of retribution. Natural religion, as well as revealed, teaches that God inflicts upon the voluntary transgressor of law a suffering that is purely vindicative of law. The pagan sages enunciate the doctrine, and it is mortised into the moral constitution of man, as is proved by his universal fear of retribution. The objection, that a suffering not intended to reform but to satisfy justice is cruel and unworthy of God, is refuted by the question of St. Paul: "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? God forbid: for how then shall God judge the world?" Rom. iii. 5, 6. It is impossible either to found or administer a government, in heaven or upon earth, unless the power to punish crime is conceded.

The endlessness of future punishment, then, is implied in the endlessness of guilt and condemnation. When a crime is condemned, it is absurd to ask, "How long is it condemned?" The verdict "Guilty for ten days" was Hibernian. Damnation means absolute and everlasting damnation. All suffering in the next life, therefore, of which the sufficient and justifying reason is guilt, must continue as long as the reason continues; and the reason is everlasting. If it be righteous to-day, in God's retributive justice, to smite the transgressor because he violated the

law yesterday, it is righteous to do the same thing to-morrow, and the next day, and so on *ad infinitum*; because the state of the case *ad infinitum* remains unaltered. The guilt incurred yesterday is a standing and endless fact. What, therefore, guilt legitimates this instant, it legitimates every instant, and forever.

It may be objected that, though the guilt and damnation of a crime be endless, it does not follow that the suffering inflicted on account of it must be endless also, even though it be retributive and not reformatory in its intent. A human judge pronounces a theft to be endlessly a theft, and a thief to be endlessly a thief, but he does not sentence the thief to an endless suffering, though he sentences him to a penal suffering. But this objection overlooks the fact that human punishment is only approximate and imperfect, not absolute and perfect like the Divine. It is not adjusted exactly and precisely to the whole guilt of the offense, but is more or less modified, first, by not considering its relation to God's honor and majesty; secondly, by human ignorance of the inward motives; and, thirdly, by social expediency. Earthly courts and judges look at the transgression of law with reference only to man's temporal relations, not his eternal. They punish an offense as a crime against the State, not as a sin against God. Neither do they look into the human heart, and estimate crime in its absolute and intrinsic nature, as does the Searcher of Hearts and the Omniscient Judge. A human tribunal punishes mayhem, we will say, with six months' imprisonment, because it does not take into consideration either the malicious and wicked anger that prompted the maiming, or the dishonor done to the Supreme Being by the transgression of his commandment. But Christ, in the final assize, punishes this offense endlessly, because his All-seeing view includes the sum-total of guilt in the case; namely, the inward wrath, the outward act, and the relation of both to the infinite perfection and adorable majesty of God. The human tribunal does not punish the inward anger at all; the Divine tribunal punishes it with hell fire: "For whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, is in danger of hell fire." Matt. v. 22. The human tribunal punishes seduction with a pecuniary fine, because it does not take cognizance of the selfish and heartless lust that prompted it, or of the affront offered to that Immaculate Holiness which from Sinai proclaimed, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." But the Divine tribunal punishes

seduction with an infinite suffering, because of its more comprehensive and truthful view of the whole transaction.

Again, human punishment, unlike the Divine, is variable and inexact, because it is to a considerable extent reformatory and protective. Human government is not intended to do the work of the Supreme Ruler. The sentence of an earthly judge is not a substitute for that of the last day. Consequently, human punishment need not be marked, even if this were possible, with all that absoluteness and exactness of justice which characterizes the Divine. Justice in the human sphere may be relaxed by expediency. The retributive element must, indeed, enter into human punishment; for no man may be punished by a human tribunal unless he deserves punishment—unless he is a criminal. But retribution is not the sole element when man punishes. Man, while not overlooking the guilt in the case, has some reference to the reformation of the offender, and still more to the protection of society. Civil expediency and social utility modify exact and strict retribution. For the sake of reforming the criminal, the judge sometimes inflicts a penalty that is less than the real guilt of the offense. For the sake of protecting society, the court sometimes sentences the criminal to a suffering greater than his crime deserves. Human tribunals, also, vary the punishment for the same offense—sometimes punishing forgery capitally, and sometimes not; sometimes sentencing those guilty of the same kind of theft to one year's imprisonment, and sometimes to two.

But the Divine tribunal, in the last great day, is invariably and exactly just, because it is neither reformatory nor protective. Hell is not a penitentiary. It is righteous retribution, pure and simple, unmodified by considerations either of utility to the criminal, or of safety to the universe. Christ, in the day of final account, will not punish wicked men and devils (for the two receive the same sentence, and go to the same place, Matt. xxv. 41), either for the sake of reforming them, or of protecting the righteous from the wicked. His punishment at that time will be nothing but retribution. The Redeemer of men is also the Eternal Judge; the Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah; and his righteous word to wicked and hardened Satan, to wicked and hardened Judas, to wicked and hardened Pope Alexander VI., will be: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay. Depart from me, ye cursed, that work iniquity." Rom. xii. 19;

Matt. xxv. 41 ; vii. 23. The wicked will reap according as they have sown. The suffering will be unerringly adjusted to the intrinsic guilt: no greater and no less than the sin deserves. "That servant which knew his lord's will [clearly], and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not [clearly], and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. As many as have sinned without [written] law, shall also perish without [written] law; and as many as have sinned under [written] law, shall be judged by the [written] law." Luke xii. 47, 48 ; Rom. ii. 12.

It is because the human court, by reason of its ignorance both of the human heart and the true nature of sin against a spiritual law and a holy God, cannot do the perfect work of the Divine tribunal, that human laws and penalties are only provisional, and not final. Earthly magistrates are permitted to modify and relax penalty, and pass a sentence which, though adapted to man's earthly circumstances, is not absolute and perfect, and is finally to be revised and made right by the omniscient accuracy of God. The human penalty that approaches nearest to the Divine is capital punishment. There is more of the purely retributive element in this than in any other. The reformatory element is wanting. And this punishment has a kind of endlessness. Death is a finality. It forever separates the murderer from earthly society, even as future punishment separates forever from the society of God and heaven.

The argument thus far goes to prove that retribution in distinction from correction, or punishment in distinction from chastisement, is endless from the nature of the case. We pass, now, to prove that it is also rational and right.

1. Endless punishment is rational, in the first place, because it is supported by the human conscience. The sinner's own conscience will "bear witness" and approve of the condemning sentence, "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. ii. 16. Dives, in the parable, when reminded of the justice of his suffering, is silent. Accordingly, all the evangelical creeds say with the Westminster (Larger Catechism, 89) that "the wicked, upon clear evidence and full conviction of their own consciences, shall have the just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them." If in the great day there are any innocent men who have no accusing consciences, they will escape hell. We may accommodate St. Paul's

words, Rom. xiii. 3, 4, and say: "The final judgment is not a terror to good works but to evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the final judgment? Keep the law of God perfectly, without a single slip or failure, inwardly or outwardly, and thou shalt have praise of the same. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid." But a sentence that is justified by the highest and best part of the human constitution must be founded in reason, justice, and truth. It is absurd to object to a judicial decision that is confirmed by the man's own immediate consciousness of its righteousness. And, as matter of fact, the opponent of endless retribution does not draw his arguments from the impartial conscience, but from the bias of self-love and desire for happiness. His objections are not ethical, but sentimental. They are not seen in the dry light of pure truth and reason, but through the colored medium of self-indulgence and love of ease and sin.

Again: a guilty conscience expects endless punishment. There is in it what the Scripture denominates "the fearful looking-for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" of God. Hebrew x. 27. This is the awful apprehension of an evil that is to last forever; otherwise, it would not be so "fearful." The knowledge that future suffering will one day cease would immediately relieve the awful apprehension of the sinner. A guilty conscience is in its very nature hopeless. Impenitent men, in their remorse, "sorrow as those who have no hope." 1 Thess. iv. 13; "having no hope, and without God in the world." Eph. ii. 12. "The hope of the wicked shall be as the giving up of the ghost." Job xi. 20. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish." Job viii. 13. Consequently, the great and distinguishing element in hell-torment is despair, a feeling that is simply impossible in any man or fallen angel who knows that he is finally to be happy forever. Despair results from the endlessness of retribution. No endlessness, no despair. Natural religion, as well as revealed, teaches the despair of some men in the future life. Plato (*Gorgias* 525), Pindar (*Olympia* II.), Plutarch (*De sera vindicta*), describe the punishment of the incorrigibly wicked as eternal and hopeless.

In Scripture, there is no such thing as eternal hope. Hope is a characteristic of earth and time only. Here in this life, all men may hope for forgiveness. "Turn, ye prisoners of hope." Zech. ix. 2. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of sal-

vation." 2 Cor. vi. 2. But in the next world there is no hope of any kind, because there is either fruition or despair. The Christian's hope is converted into its realization: "For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it?" Rom. viii. 24. And the impenitent sinner's hope of heaven is converted into despair. Canon Farrar's phrase "eternal hope" is derived from Pandora's box, not from the Bible. Dante's legend over the portal of hell is the truth: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

That conscience supports endless retribution, is also evinced by the universality and steadiness of the dread of it. Mankind believe in hell, as they believe in the Divine Existence, by reason of their moral sense. Notwithstanding all the attack made upon the tenet in every generation, by a fraction of every generation, men do not get rid of their fear of future punishment. Skeptics themselves are sometimes distressed by it. But a permanent and general fear among mankind cannot be produced by a mere chimera, or a pure figment of the imagination. Men have no fear of Rhadamanthus, nor can they be made to fear him, because they know that there is no such being. "An idol is nothing in the world." 1 Cor. viii. 4. But men have "the fearful looking-for of judgment" from the lips of God, ever and always. If the Biblical hell were as much a nonentity as the heathen Atlantis, no one would waste his time in endeavoring to prove its non-existence. What man would seriously construct an argument to demonstrate that there is no such being as Jupiter Ammon, or such an animal as the centaur? The very denial of endless retribution evinces by its spasmodic eagerness and effort to disprove the tenet, the firmness with which it is intrenched in man's moral constitution. If there really were no hell, absolute indifference toward the notion would long since have been the mood of all mankind, and no arguments, either for or against it, would be constructed.

And finally, the demand, even here upon earth, for the punishment of the intensely and incorrigibly wicked proves that retribution is grounded in the human conscience. When abominable and satanic sin is temporarily triumphant, as it sometimes has been in the history of the world, men cry out to God for his vengeance to come down. "If there were no God, we should be compelled to invent one," is now a familiar sentiment. "If there were no hell, we should be compelled to invent one," is equally true. When examples of great depravity occur, man cries:

"How long, O Lord, how long!" The non-infliction of retribution upon hardened villainy and successful cruelty causes anguish in the moral sense. For the expression of it, read the imprecatory psalms and Milton's sonnet on the Massacre in Piedmont.

2. In the second place, endless punishment is rational, because of the endlessness of sin. If the preceding view of the relation of penalty to guilt be correct, endless punishment is just, without bringing the sin of the future world into the account. Man incurs everlasting punishment for "the things done in his body." 2 Cor. v. 10. Christ sentences men to perdition, not for what they are going to do in eternity, but for what they have already done in time. It is not necessary that a man should commit all kinds of sin, or that he should sin a very long time, in order to be a sinner. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James ii. 10. One sin makes guilt, and guilt makes hell.

But while this is so, it is a fact to be observed, that sin is actually being added to sin, in the future life, and the amount of guilt is accumulating. The lost spirit is "treasuring up wrath." Rom. ii. 5. Hence, there are degrees in the intensity of endless suffering. The difference in the grade arises from the greater resoluteness of the wicked self-determination, and the greater degree of light that was enjoyed upon earth. He who sins against the moral law as it is drawn out in the Sermon on the Mount sins more determinedly and desperately than the pagan who sins against the light of nature. There are probably no men in paganism who sin so willfully and devilishly as some men in Christendom. Profanity, or the blaspheming of God, is a Christian and not a Heathen characteristic. There are degrees in future suffering, because it is infinite in duration only. In intensity, it is finite. Consequently, the lost do not all suffer precisely alike, though all suffer the same length of time. A thing may be infinite in one respect and finite in others. A line may be infinite in length, and not in breadth and depth. A surface may be infinite in length and breadth, and not in depth. And two persons may suffer infinitely in the sense of endlessly, and yet one experience more pain than the other.

The endlessness of sin results, first, from the nature and energy of sinful self-determination. Sin is the creature's act solely. God does not work in the human will when it will

antagonistically to him. Consequently, self-determination to evil is an extremely vehement activity of the will. There is no will so willful as a wicked will. Sin is stubborn and obstinate in its nature, because it is enmity and rebellion. Hence, wicked will intensifies itself perpetually. Pride, left to itself, increases and never diminishes. Enmity and hatred become more and more satanic. "Sin," says South, "is the only perpetual motion which has yet been found out, and needs nothing but a beginning to keep it incessantly going on." Upon this important point, Aristotle, in the seventh book of his *Ethics*, reasons with great truth and impressiveness. He distinguishes between ἀκολασία and ἀρπαγία; between strong will to wickedness and weak self-indulgence. The former is viciousness from deliberation and preference, and implies an intense determination to evil in the man. He goes wrong, not so much from the pull of appetite and passion, as purposely, knowingly, and energetically. He has great strength of will, and he puts it all forth in resolute wickedness. The latter quality is more the absence than the presence of will; it is the weakness and irresolution of a man who has no powerful self-determination of any kind. The condition of the former of these two men, Aristotle regarded as worse than that of the latter. He considered it to be desperate and hopeless. The evil is incurable. Repentance and reformation are impossible to this man; for the wickedness in this instance is not mere appetite; it is a principle; it is cold-blooded and total depravity.

Another reason for the endlessness of sin is the bondage of the sinful will. In the very act of transgressing the law of God, there is a reflex action of the human will upon itself, whereby it becomes unable to perfectly keep that law. Sin is the suicidal action of the human will. A man is not forced to kill himself, but if he does, he cannot bring himself to life again. And a man is not forced to sin, but if he does, he cannot of himself get back where he was before sinning. He cannot get back to innocence, nor can he get back to holiness of heart. The effect of vicious habit in diminishing a man's ability to resist temptation is proverbial. An old and hardened debauchee, like Tiberius or Louis XV., just going into the presence of Infinite Purity, has not so much power of active resistance against the sin that has now ruined him as the youth has who is just beginning to run that awful career. The truth and fact is, that sin, in and by its own nature and operation, tends to destroy all virtuous force, all holy

energy, in any moral being. The excess of will to sin is the same thing as defect of will to holiness. The human will cannot be forced and ruined from without. But if we watch the influence of the will upon itself; the influence of its own wrong decisions, and its own yielding to temptations; we shall find that the voluntary faculty may be ruined from within—may surrender itself with such an absorbing vehemence and totality to appetite, passion, and selfishness, that it becomes unable to reverse itself and overcome its own inclination and self-determination. And yet, from beginning to end, there is no compulsion in this process. The transgressor follows himself alone. He has his own way, and does as he likes. Neither God, nor the world, nor Satan forces him either to be, or to do, evil. Sin is the most spontaneous of self-motion. But self-motion has consequences as much as any other motion. And moral bondage is one of them. "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin," says Christ. John viii. 34.

The culmination of this bondage is seen in the next life. The sinful propensity, being allowed to develop unresisted and unchecked, slowly but surely eats out all virtuous force as rust eats out a steel spring, until in the awful end the will becomes all habit, all lust, and all sin. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James i. 15. In the final stage of this process, which commonly is not reached until death, when "the spirit returns unto God who gave it," the guilty free agent reaches that dreadful condition where resistance to evil ceases altogether, and surrender to evil becomes demoniacal. The cravings and hankerings of long-indulged and unresisted sin become organic, and drag the man; and "he goeth after them as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks—till a dart strike through his liver." Prov. vii. 22, 23. For though the will to resist sin may die out of a man, the conscience to condemn it never can. This remains eternally. And when the process is complete; when the responsible creature in the abuse of free agency has perfected his moral ruin; when his will to good is all gone; there remain these two in his immortal spirit—sin and conscience, "brimstone and fire." Rev. xxi. 8.

Still another reason for the endlessness of sin is the fact that rebellious enmity toward law and its Source is not diminished, but increased, by the righteous punishment experienced by the impenitent transgressor. Penal suffering is beneficial only when it is humbly accepted, is acknowledged to be deserved, and is

penitently submitted to; when the transgressor says: "Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Luke xv. 18, 19; when, with the penitent thief, he says: "We are in this condemnation justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds." Luke xxiii. 41. But when in this life retribution is denied and jeered at; and when in the next life it is complained of and resisted, and the arm of hate and defiance is raised against the tribunal, penalty hardens and exasperates. This is impenitence. Such is the temper of Satan; and such is the temper of all who finally become his associates. This explains why there is no repentance in hell, and no meek submission to the Supreme Judge. This is the reason why Dives, the impenitent sensualist, is informed that there is no possible passage from Hades to Paradise, by reason of the "great gulf fixed" between the two; and this is the reason why he asks that Lazarus may be sent to warn his five brethren, "lest they also come into this place of torment," where the request for "a drop of water" — a mitigation of punishment — is solemnly refused by the Eternal Arbiter. A state of existence in which there is not the slightest relaxing of penal suffering is no state of probation.

3. In the third place, endless punishment is rational, because sin is an infinite evil; infinite not because committed by an infinite being, but against one. We reason invariably upon this principle. To torture a dumb beast is a crime; to torture a man is a greater crime. The person who transgresses is the same in each instance; but the different worth and dignity of the objects upon whom his action terminates makes the difference in the gravity of the two offenses. David's adultery was a finite evil in reference to Uriah, but an infinite evil in reference to God. "Against thee only have I sinned," was the feeling of the sinner in this case. Had the patriarch Joseph yielded, he would have sinned against Pharaoh. But the greatness of the sin as related to the fellow-creature is lost in its enormity as related to the Creator, and his only question is: "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Gen. xxxix. 9.

The incarnation and vicarious satisfaction for sin by one of the persons of the Godhead demonstrates the infinity of the evil. It is incredible that the Eternal Trinity should have submitted to such a stupendous self-sacrifice, to remove a merely finite and temporal evil. The doctrine of Christ's vicarious atonement, logically,

stands or falls with that of endless punishment. Historically, it has stood or fallen with it. The incarnation of Almighty God, in order to make the remission of sin possible, is one of the strongest arguments for the eternity and infinity of penal suffering.

The objection that an offense committed in a finite time cannot be an infinite evil, and deserve an infinite suffering, implies that crime must be measured by the time that was consumed in its perpetration. But even in human punishment, no reference is had to the length of time occupied in the commission of the offense. Murder is committed in an instant, and theft sometimes requires hours. But the former is the greater crime, and receives the greater punishment.

4. That endless punishment is reasonable is proved by the preference of the wicked themselves. The unsubmissive, rebellious, defiant, and impenitent spirit prefers hell to heaven. Milton correctly represents Satan as saying: "All good to me becomes bane, and in heaven much worse would be my state"; and, also, as declaring that "it is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." This agrees with the Scripture representation, that Judas went "to his own place." Acts i. 25.

The lost spirits are not forced into a sphere that is unsuited to them. There is no other abode in the universe which they would prefer to that to which they are assigned, because the only other abode is heaven. The meekness, lowliness, sweet submission to God, and love of him, that characterize heaven, are more hateful to Lucifer and his angels than even the sufferings of hell. The wicked would be no happier in heaven than in hell. The burden and anguish of a guilty conscience, says South, is so insupportable that some "have done violence to their own lives, and so fled to hell as a sanctuary, and chose damnation as a release." This is illustrated by facts in human life. The thoroughly vicious and ungodly man prefers the license and freedom to sin which he finds in the haunts of vice to the restraints and purity of Christian society. There is hunger, disease, and wretchedness in one circle; and there is plenty, health, and happiness in the other. But he prefers the former. He would rather be in the gambling-house and brothel than in the Christian home.

The finally lost are not to be conceived of as having faint desires and aspirations for a holy and heavenly state, and as feebly but really inclined to sorrow for their sin, but are kept in hell contrary to their yearning and petition. They are sometimes so de-

scribed by the opponent of the doctrine, or at least so thought of. There is not a single throb of godly sorrow or a single pulsation of holy desire in the lost spirit. The temper toward God in the lost is angry and defiant. "They hate both me and my Father," says the Son of God, "without a cause." John xv. 24, 25. Satan and his followers "love darkness rather than light," hell rather than heaven, "because their deeds are evil." John iii. 19. Sin ultimately assumes a fiendish form and degree. It is pure wickedness without regret or sorrow, and with a delight in evil for evil's sake. There are some men who reach this state of depravity even before they die. They are seen in the callous and cruel voluptuaries portrayed by Tacitus, and the heaven-defying atheists described by St. Simon. They are also depicted in Shakespeare's Iago. The reader knows that Iago is past saving, and deserves everlasting damnation. Impulsively, he cries out with Lodovico: "Where is that viper? bring the villain forth." And then Othello's calmer but deeper feeling becomes his own: "I look down towards his feet — but that's a fable: If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee." The punishment is remitted to the retribution of God.

5. That endless punishment is rational, is proved by the history of morals. In the history of human civilization and morality, it is found that that age which is most reckless of law, and most vicious in practice, is the age that has the loosest conception of penalty, and is the most inimical to the doctrine of endless retribution. A virtuous and religious generation adopts sound ethics, and reverently believes that "the Judge of all the earth will do right," Gen. xviii. 25; that God will not "call evil good, and good evil, nor put darkness for light and light for darkness," Isa. v. 20; and that it is a deadly error to assert with the sated and worn-out sensualist: "All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous and the wicked." Eccl. ix. 2.

The French people, at the close of the last century, were a very demoralized and vicious generation, and there was a very general disbelief and denial of the doctrines of the Divine existence, the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and future retribution. And upon a smaller scale, the same fact is continually repeating itself. Any little circle of business men who are known to deny future rewards and punishments are shunned by those who desire safe investments. The recent un-

common energy of opposition to endless punishment, which started about ten years ago in this country, synchronized with great defalcations and breaches of trust, uncommon corruption in mercantile and political life, and great distrust between man and man. Luxury deadens the moral sense, and luxurious populations are not apt to have the fear of God before their eyes. Hence luxurious ages are immoral.

One remark remains to be made respecting the extent and scope of hell. It is only a spot in the universe of God. Compared with heaven, hell is narrow and limited. The kingdom of Satan is insignificant in contrast with the kingdom of Christ. In the immense range of God's dominion, good is the rule, and evil is the exception. Sin is a speck upon the infinite azure of eternity; a spot on the sun. Hell is only a corner of the universe. The Gothic etymon denotes a covered-up hole. In Scripture, hell is a "pit," a "lake"; not an ocean. It is "bottomless," but not boundless. The Gnostic and Dualistic theories, which make God and Satan or the Demiurge nearly equal in power and dominion, find no support in Revelation. The Bible teaches that there will always be some sin and some death in the universe. Some angels and men will forever be the enemies of God. But their number, compared with that of unfallen angels and redeemed men, is small. They are not described in the glowing language and metaphors by which the immensity of the holy and blessed is delineated. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, and thousands of angels." Ps. lxxviii. 17. "The Lord came from Sinai, and shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of his saints." Deut. xxxii. 2. "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. ciii. 21. "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." Matt. vi. 13. The Lord Christ "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. xv. 25. St. John "heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder." Rev. xiv. 1. The New Jerusalem "lieth four square, the length is as large as the breadth; the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; the kings of the earth do bring their honor into it." Rev. xxi. 16, 24, 25. The number of the lost spirits is never thus emphasized and enlarged upon. The brief, stern statement is, that "the fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xxi. 8. No metaphors and amplifications are added to make

the impression of an immense "multitude which no man can number."

We have thus briefly presented the rational defense of the most severe and unwelcome of all the tenets of the Christian religion. It must have a foothold in the human reason, or it could not have maintained itself against all the recoil and opposition which it elicits from the human heart. Founded in ethics, in law, and in judicial reason, as well as unquestionably taught by the Author of Christianity, it is no wonder that the doctrine of eternal retribution, in spite of selfish prejudices and appeals to human sentiment, has always been a belief of Christendom. From theology and philosophy it has passed into human literature, and is wrought into its finest structures. It makes the solemn substance of the *Iliad* and the Greek Drama. It pours a somber light into the brightness and grace of the *Æneid*. It is the theme of the *Inferno*, and is presupposed by both of the other parts of the *Divine Comedy*. The epic of Milton derives from it its awful grandeur. And the greatest of the Shakespearean tragedies sound and stir the depths of the human soul by their delineation of guilt intrinsic and eternal.

In this discussion, we have purposely brought into view only the righteousness of Almighty God, as related to the voluntary and responsible action of man. We have set holy justice and disobedient free-will face to face, and drawn the conclusions. This is all that the defender of the doctrine of retribution is strictly concerned with. If he can demonstrate that the principles of eternal rectitude are not in the least degree infringed upon, but are fully maintained, when sin is endlessly punished, he has done all that his problem requires. Whatever is just is beyond all rational attack.

But with the Christian Gospel in his hands, the defender of the Divine justice finds it difficult to be entirely reticent and say not a word concerning the Divine mercy. Over against God's infinite antagonism and righteous severity toward moral evil there stands God's infinite pity and desire to forgive. This is realized, not by the high-handed and unprincipled method of pardoning without legal satisfaction of any kind, but by the strange and stupendous method of putting the Eternal Judge in the place of the human criminal; of substituting God's satisfaction for that due from man. In this vicarious atonement for sin, the Triune God relinquishes no claims of law, and waives no

rights of justice. The sinner's Divine Substitute, in his hour of voluntary agony and death, drinks the cup of punitive and inexorable justice to the dregs. Any man who, in penitent faith, avails himself of this vicarious method of setting himself right with the Eternal Nemesis, will find that it succeeds; but he who rejects it must through endless cycles grapple with the dread problem of human guilt in his own person, and alone.

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